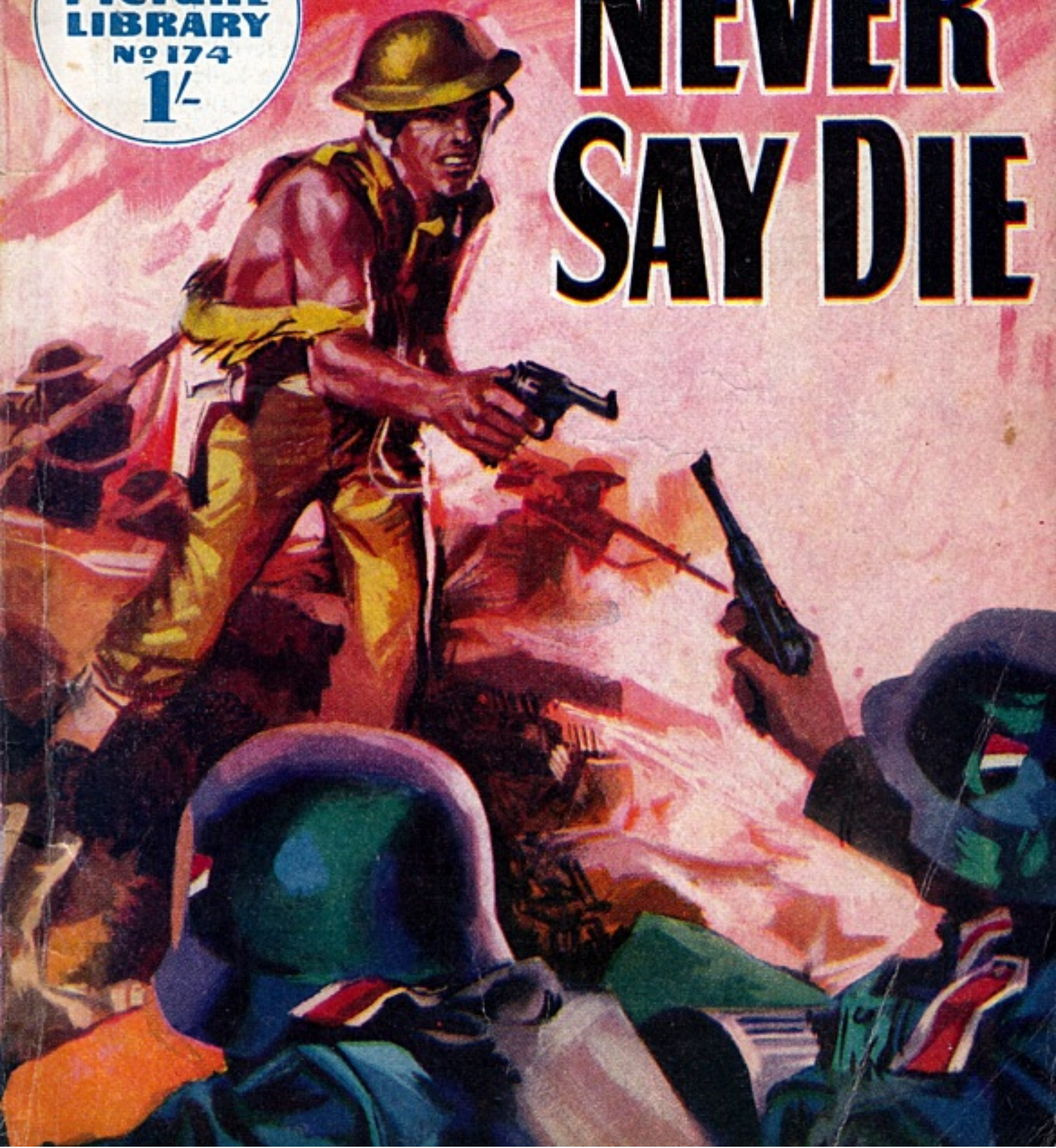


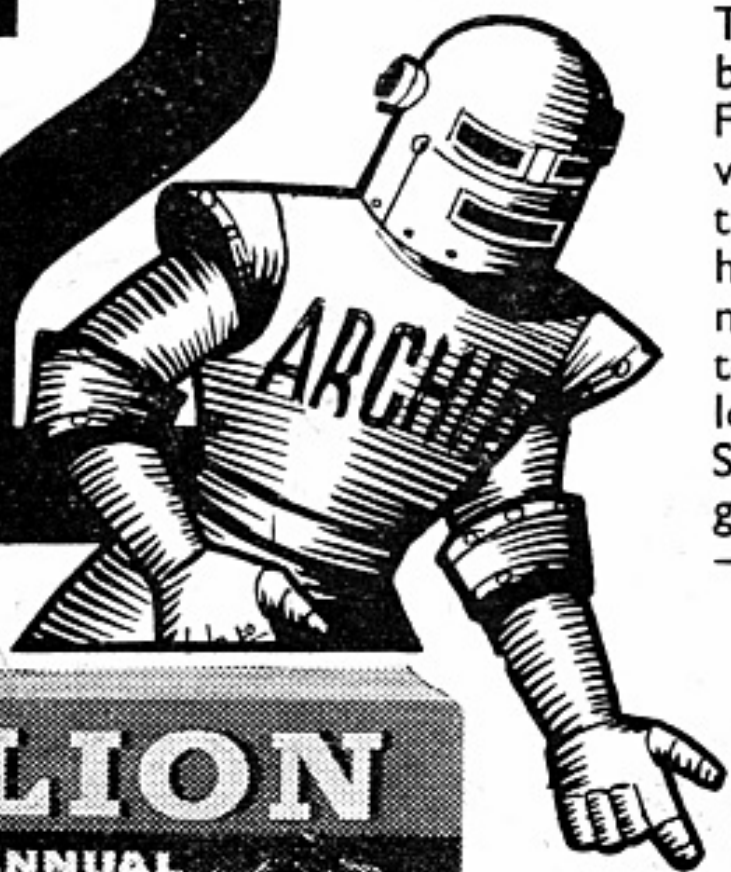


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NEVER SAY DIE

THE THREAT OF DEFEAT BRINGS OUT THE BEST IN SOME MEN, THE WORST IN OTHERS. THE BRAVE REACT TO IT WITH GALLANT DEFIANCE, STUBBORN REFUSAL TO SUBMIT. BUT OTHERS PUT UP LITTLE RESISTANCE, COLLABORATE WITH THE ENEMY - OR EVEN TURN TRAITOR.



Chapter 1. *Strange Visitor*

MY FRIEND, TOM RHODES, A WINE IMPORTER, ASKED ME A FEW MONTHS AGO TO HELP HIM ESTABLISH A BUYING AGENCY IN CRETE. I LITTLE KNEW WHEN I AGREED TO DO SO WHERE THIS WOULD LEAD ME. A MAN NAMED JOSIAH HANKEY WAS THE BUYER, WHOM I WAS TO ADVISE. . .



I DISTRUSTED HANKEY FROM THE BEGINNING FOR I DON'T LIKE PEOPLE WHO THROW THEIR WEIGHT AROUND. STILL, I TRIED TO BE FRIENDLY. . .



THEN I NOTICED HANKEY'S TIE - THE RED, GREEN, AND YELLOW OF THE "FIFTIETH FUSILIERS" AND I THOUGHT OF THE PERFECT LET OUT.

MY AGENT IN CRETE WILL BE YOUR BEST CONTACT. HE KNOWS THE ISLAND BACKWARDS. WAS BADLY WOUNDED WHILE WITH THE PARTISANS IN THE WAR. AND SERVED WITH THE FIFTIETH FUSILIERS. SO YOU PROBABLY KNOW HIM. NAME OF JOHNNY MALES!

MALES!
DID YOU SAY -
MALES?



I'VE NEVER SEEN A MAN MORE SHAKEN. HE SNATCHED UP HIS HAT AND UMBRELLA AND RUSHED OUT, SHOUTING SOME GIBBERISH.

MALES
IS DEAD! DEAD,
D'YOU HEAR?
DEAD!



Never Say Die

AT LUNCH, TOM RHODES ONLY DEEPEINED THE MYSTERY. . .

HANKEY ALWAYS WAS A QUEER BIRD! NOW HE'S GONE QUITE BONKERS - RUSHED IN FOAMING AT THE MOUTH, GRABBED HIS THINGS, TOLD ME WHAT I COULD DO WITH THE JOB AND PUSHED OFF!

BUT I DIDN'T DO A THING OUT OF PLACE, OLD CHAP, HONESTLY!

WHEN I GOT BACK TO MY FLAT, ANOTHER SURPRISE AWAITED ME - AN UNPLEASANT ONE.

WHAT THE DEUCE ARE YOU DOING HERE?

I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU! I KNOW MALES IS DEAD, SO YOU MUST KNOW MY SECRET! THAT IS DANGEROUS!

I PLAYED IT HIS WAY. BUT TO ME HE JUST LOOKED AND SOUNDED PLAIN CRAZY.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE NATTERING ABOUT! MALES IS VERY MUCH ALIVE!

THAT MAKES IT WORSE! AFTER TWENTY YEARS, I COULD HAVE GONE TO CRETE AGAIN - NO-ONE WOULD HAVE KNOWN ME! BUT MALES IS ALIVE AND HE KNOWS - AND NOW YOU KNOW! SO I SHALL HAVE TO KILL YOU BOTH!

I WAS SHAKEN RIGID. BUT I HADN'T FORGOTTEN MY UNARMED COMBAT FROM THE OLD COMMANDO DAYS - AND I JUMPED THE CRAZY FOOL . . .

CURSE YOU, MEREDITH!

GOT YOU!



BUT HANKEY WAS QUICK, TOO. I GOT THE GUN, BUT BEFORE I COULD GET HIM, HE THREW ME WITH A NEAT COUNTER-THROW AND WAS OFF LIKE A GREYHOUND.

COME
BACK, YOU
FOOL!

I'LL
GET YOU
YET,
MEREDITH!

I TRIED ALL I KNEW - SHORT OF THE POLICE - TO FIND HIM DURING THE FOLLOWING DAY OR TWO. BUT HE HAD VANISHED.

IF YOU'VE TRIED HIS FLAT, HIS CLUB
AND THE FIFTIETH, I CAN'T HELP YOU ANY
MORE. BESIDES, YOUR STORY JUST
DOESN'T MAKE SENSE!

YOU KNOW,
I'M WORRIED ABOUT
JOHNNY MALES AND
THAT LUNATIC!
I'VE AN UNEASY
FEELING!

SO I CABLED JOHNNY AND WITHIN SIX HOURS, I WAS ON THE NIGHT FLIGHT TO ATHENS.

I MUST
GET TO THE
BOTTOM OF THIS
BUSINESS.



TWO DAYS LATER, I WAS SITTING EATING BREAKFAST ON THE TERRACE OF JOHNNY'S HOUSE, PERCHED ON THE HILLS OVERLOOKING THE MOUTH OF SUDA BAY.

...WELL,
JOHNNY, THAT'S WHAT
HAPPENED! CAN
YOU MAKE
ANYTHING OF
IT?

HAVE A
LOOK AT THIS
PHOTOGRAPH. THEN
WE'LL GO FOR A
WALK AND
I'LL TELL YOU
A LONG
STORY.



THE PHOTOGRAPH SHOWED FIVE OFFICERS OF THE "FIFTIETH". . .

THEY'RE
ALL DEAD NOW,
EXCEPT ME
AND - MUCH TO
MY SURPRISE,
HANKEY!



WE WALKED INLAND FOR MILES. THROUGH
OLIVE GROVES, PAST SMALL VILLAGES, UP
INTO THE HILLS UNTIL WE CLIMBED
TOWARDS THE SHATTERED REMAINS OF
A WATCHTOWER.

THAT'S WHERE I LOST
MY ARM. IT WAS A TOUGH FIGHT,
IT NEARLY ENDED ME, AND
I THOUGHT IT HAD
ENDED HANKEY. BUT
I'M GOING TOO
FAST. . .



HERE FOLLOWS THE STORY MORE OR LESS
AS JOHNNY MALES TOLD IT TO ME. . .

Chapter 2. Invasion

AFTER THE FALL OF GREECE, CRETE WAS OBVIOUSLY NEXT ON THE GERMANS' LIST.



SO "A" COMPANY OF THE FIFTIETH FUSILIERS FOUND THEMSELVES DEFENDING CAPE BUSA. THE SUN WAS WARM, THE SEA BLUE AND ENTICING. THE WAR SEEMED A LONG WAY OFF.



THE WEEKS PASSED AND NOTHING HAPPENED. THE MEN WERE BORED AND STALE AND MAJOR JONAS, THE COMPANY COMMANDER, BEGAN TO WORRY.

THIS COMPANY'S GOING TO THE DOGS - THE DISCIPLINE IS DISGRACEFUL! HANKEY, AS SECOND IN COMMAND, I EXPECT YOU TO KEEP THINGS GINGERED UP.

YOU WORRY TOO MUCH, SIR! NOTHING'LL HAPPEN! BESIDES, THE N.C.O.s CAN BE TRUSTED!

BUT CAPTAIN JOSIAH HANKEY WAS VERY WRONG. THE STORM WAS ABOUT TO BREAK OVER CRETE.

TOMORROW, WE MARCH AGAINST THE ENGLANDERS! STRIKE HARD, MEN, FOR THE FUEHRER AND THE FATHERLAND! SIEG HEIL!




AT DAWN, THE LUFTWAFFE LAUNCHED THE ATTACK. "A" COMPANY, IN PERFECT SAFETY, WATCHED THEIR COMRADES BEING POUNDED ONLY A FEW MILES AWAY.



THEY'RE
TAKING A
PROPER PASTING
ROUND
MALEME,
SIR!

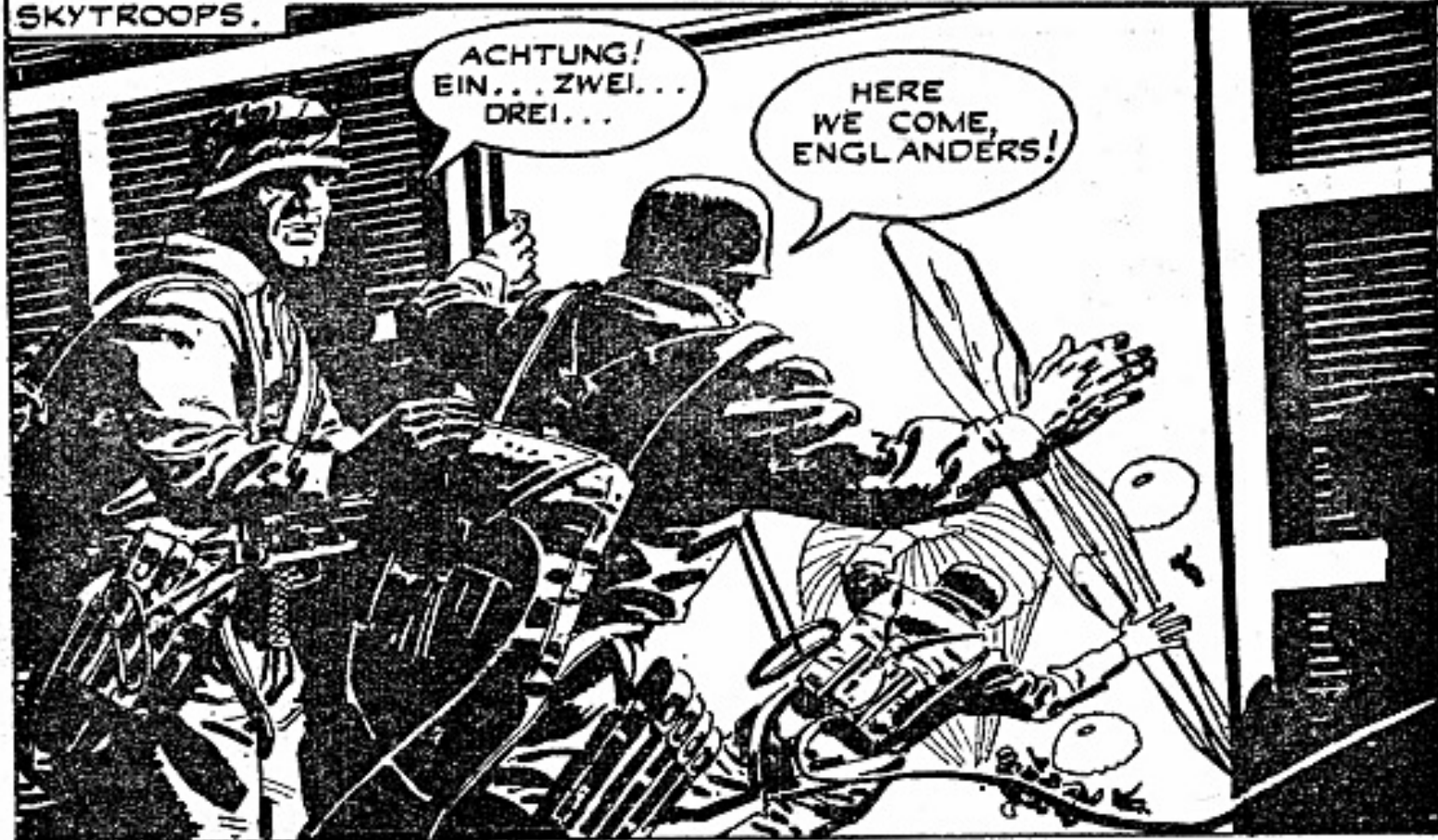
OUR
TURN'LL COME,
SAR'-MAJOR!



BATTALION
SAYS TO WATCH
OUT FOR
PARATROOPS,
SIR!

RIGHT!
ACKNOWLEDGE!
SAR'-MAJOR, TWO
PLATOONS
WILL STAND
TO!

THE SKY OVER MALEME WAS FILLED WITH THE ROAR OF AIRCRAFT, AND DOTTED WITH THE MANY COLOURED PARACHUTES OF THE ENEMY SKYTROOPS.



BUT ALTHOUGH ALL HELL WAS BEING LOOSED AT MALEME, AT CAPE BUSA, ALL WAS PEACE. EVEN SO, THE TENSION WAS HAVING ITS EFFECT. . . .



AT THAT MOMENT, A JU 52, CRIPPLED PERHAPS BY ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE, BEGAN TO BANK INTO THE QUIET VALLEY.



THE ALARM HAD ALREADY BEEN RAISED. . . .

HANKEY, TAKE ONE PLATOON, WORK ROUND FROM THE SOUTH! I'LL TAKE TWO PLATOON UP TO JAMIESON AND GO IN FROM THE FRONT! MALES, YOU'RE IN COMMAND HERE!



LIEUTENANT JAMIESON HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO CONTROL HIS FOOLHARDY EAGERNESS TO GET TO GRIPS WITH THE INVADERS.

LOOK AT MISTER JAMIESON, SIR! HE'LL GET HIMSELF KILLED!

HE'LL HAVE TO TAKE HIS CHANCE, SAR-MAJOR. TAKE A SECTION DOWN AND STOP THEM TRYING TO BREAK BACK!



JAMIESON DID NOT COVER TEN YARDS BEFORE HE WAS CUT DOWN. THEN FOLLOWED A DEADLY GAME OF HIDE AND SEEK. . .

GOT ONE!



SLOWLY, THE GERMANS WERE DRIVEN BACK UNTIL THEY WERE FORCED TO TAKE REFUGE IN A ROCKY GULLY.

NO SURRENDER!

WHERE THE BLAZES IS HANKEY? HE SHOULD HAVE COME UP BEHIND THEM HOURS AGO! WELL, WE CAN'T WAIT FOR HIM! WE'LL HAVE TO RUSH THEM OURSELVES!





PERHAPS MAJOR JONAS SHOULD HAVE WAITED FOR HANKEY AND HIS MEN - BUT DELAY COULD HAVE BEEN DANGEROUS.

HECK!
THEY'VE GOT
THE MAJOR!

THEY WIPED OUT THE GERMANS, BUT THEIR OWN LOSSES WERE SERIOUS.

YOUNG JAMIESON JUST WASTED HIS LIFE! NOW WE'LL SEE WHERE WE ARE WITHOUT THE MAJOR! UP THE CREEK!



I'LL SWEAR
HANKEY LOST US
DELIBERATELY.
I THINK HE'S
YELLOW!

AT MALEME, THE FIGHTING WAS FEROCIOUS. THINGS WERE GOING BADLY FOR THE BRITISH.



I'M SORRY ABOUT JONAS! HANKEY, THE SITUATION IS DETERIORATING HERE! THIS LAND LINE CAN'T LAST MUCH LONGER! WHEN IT GOES, YOU'LL BE ON YOUR OWN! USE YOUR OWN INITIATIVE!

THE COLONEL HAD SCARCELY FINISHED SPEAKING WHEN HIS FORECAST CAME TRUE.

THE LINE'S GONE DEAD! GOOD GRIEF! WHAT SHALL I DO NOW?



IF THE SEEDS OF PANIC AND DEFEAT WERE ALREADY SOWN IN HANKEY'S MIND, IT WAS NOT SO WITH THE DEFIANT DEFENDERS OF MALEME.



BUT CLOSE GERMAN SUPPORT FROM THE AIR HARASSED ANY ALLIED COUNTER-ATTACKS.



WITH LITTLE AIR COVER OF THEIR OWN, THE ALLIES WERE EASY TARGETS FOR MACHINE-GUN FIRE AND ANTI-PERSONNEL BOMBS.



AT CAPE BUSA, CAPTAIN HANKEY SAT PETRIFIED INTO INACTION.

WE'VE BEEN WITHOUT ORDERS FOR THIRTY-SIX HOURS NOW! WE COULD ATTACK JERRY FROM THE REAR! HE DOESN'T KNOW WE'RE HERE!



ONE COMPANY? WHAT GOOD WOULD THAT DO!

THEN CAME AN INTERRUPTION THAT DID NOTHING TO RESTORE HANKEY'S CONFIDENCE.

WHO THE DEVIL ARE YOU?



SERGEANT SMITH, SIR! I'M ALL THAT'S LEFT OF 'C' COMPANY. WE'VE HAD A PROPER BASHING! THEY'RE EVACUATING THE ISLAND FROM SOME PLACE CALLED SPHAKIA!

HANKEY COULD NO LONGER DISGUISE THE FEAR THAT HELD HIM IN ITS ICY GRIP.

THERE'S A BIG JERRY PATROL COMING ~ ONLY A COUPLE OF MILES AWAY!

WE HAVEN'T A CHANCE. WE'LL HAVE TO SURRENDER!

THAT WE WON'T!



THE OTHERS BEGAN TO FILE OUT OF THE TENT AT A GESTURE FROM JOHNNY MALES. HANKEY WAS ON HIS FEET, HIS FACE CONTORTED WITH FURY. . .

I'M IN COMMAND HERE!

SORRY, HANKEY ~ WE'RE NOT MEEKLY WALKING INTO A P.O.W. CAGE ON YOUR ORDERS!




A MOMENT LATER. . .



SERGEANT! GIVE
MISTER HANKEY A HAND,
HE'S JUST FALLEN -
AND - ER - BUMPED
HIS HEAD!

ER - WHAT? OH,
I SEE WHAT YOU
MEAN, SIR...

THEN JOHNNY MALES WAS GIVING ORDERS - QUICKLY AND WITHOUT
HESITATION. THE MEN RESPONDED EAGERLY.



GET
CRACKING, CHAPS!
STOCK UP WITH AMMO,
WATER, RATIONS, YOU'VE
GOT FIVE MINUTES!
SERGEANT, TAKE A FEW
MEN FOR A
REARGUARD! WE'LL
HEAD SOUTH
DOWN THE
COAST!

COR!
YOUNG
MALES IS
GOING TO DO US
PROUD AFTER
ALL!

THEY WERE ONLY JUST IN TIME. EVEN AS THEY MOVED OUT, THE REARGUARD GAVE THE ENEMY A HOT RECEPTION.

LOOK, SARGE! THEY'RE BRINGING UP MORTARS!

NEVER MIND THAT! GIVE ME ANOTHER MAG - AND WE'LL SEE IF THE BREN CAN REACH THAT FAR! WE'LL HAVE TO GIVE THE BOYS AT LEAST ANOTHER HALF AN HOUR!

THE GERMAN WAR-MACHINE WAS SOON WORKING SWIFTLY AND EFFICIENTLY TO COUNTER THIS UNEXPECTED SHOW OF RESISTANCE.

AND THREE COMPANY TO MOVE FAST ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS AND STOP THEM REACHING THE ROAD TO SPHAKIA!

THIS IS BATTALION! ENGLANDERS MOVING SOUTH FROM BUSA! NUMBER ONE COMPANY IS FOLLOWING! NUMBER TWO COMPANY WILL MOVE ACROSS TO CUT THEM OFF!



BUT MALES WAS LEARNING FAST. HIS INSTINCT WAS WORKING OVERTIME.

HOLD IT, CHAPS! I DON'T LIKE THE FEEL OF THIS!



YES, JERRY'S WAITING FOR US, ALL RIGHT - BUT I DON'T THINK THEY'VE SPOTTED US YET. WE'LL BREAK LEFT UP THIS GULLY AND SLIP ROUND THE BACK! WE CAN GET BACK TO THE ROAD WHEN IT'S DARK!

IT'S MADNESS, MALES - WE'LL NEVER GET AWAY WITH IT!



SINCE MALES HAD ASSUMED COMMAND, HANKEY HAD BEEN TRYING TO NERVE HIMSELF TO RE-ASSERT HIS AUTHORITY ~ BUT WITHOUT SUCCESS AND HE TRUDGED NERVOUSLY AFTER THE OTHERS. WHEN NIGHT FELL, THE TIRED MEN TURNED BACK TO THE ROAD...



BY FIRST LIGHT, MALES BELIEVED THAT HE HAD PUT TWENTY MILES BETWEEN HIS MEN AND THE GERMANS. THEN AN ENEMY RECCE PLANE CAME BUZZING OVER...



THE FIESELER STORCH KEPT FLYING ROUND IN INTERMINABLE CIRCLES ~ AND, AT LAST, CAPTAIN HANKEY'S DISTRAUGHT NERVES GAVE WAY AGAIN.



THE WILD SHOTS WENT NOWHERE NEAR THE RECCE PLANE WHICH PROMPTLY SHEERED OFF. FIVE MINUTES LATER, AS MALES HURRIED HIS NEAR EXHAUSTED MEN TOWARDS BETTER COVER . . .



EVENTUALLY, THE ME-109s MUST HAVE USED UP ALL THEIR AMMUNITION FOR THEY FLEW OFF AND MALES WAS ABLE TO GATHER HIS MEN IN A PLACE OF CONCEALMENT.

WE SHOULD BE SAFE HERE FOR A BIT! WE'LL REST UP AND THINK WHAT TO DO NEXT! WE CAN'T BE FAR FROM SPHAKIA AND THERE SHOULD BE A DEFENCE LINE THERE!

HOW MANY OF US LEFT?

THIRTY-ONE, SIR, NOT COUNTING YOU AND ME! THAT'S ALL!



CAPTAIN HANKEY SUDDENLY REVIVED AT THE MENTION OF THE NEARNESS OF SPHAKIA - AND SAFETY.

LISTEN, MALES -
I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS! I'M
THE SENIOR OFFICER AND
I'M TAKING OVER NOW!
THAT'S AN ORDER!

WELL - YOU'VE
GOT THE RANK! BUT FOR
PETE'S SAKE, DON'T
MESS THE WHOLE
THING UP
AGAIN!



BUT HANKEY'S BURST OF CONFIDENCE IN HIMSELF WAS SHORT-LIVED.

FOUND
THESE TWO,
SIR!

WE'RE FROM THE
NEW ZEALANDER
RIFLES. YOU'VE HAD IT,
CHUMS! IT'S ALL
OVER - WE'VE
CAPITULATED!

WHAT?



THE HUNS REACHED SPHAKIA THIS MORNING! IF WE CAN CROSS THE ROAD WE COULD HIDE-UP IN THE HILLS! WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A GO!

THEN I - I SUPPOSE WE'D BETTER DO THE SAME!

NOT SUPPOSE - WE DO!



BUT THE ROAD WAS NOT SO EASY TO CROSS AFTER ALL. THE GERMAN No. 3 COMPANY WAS ABOUT TO START ITS SWEEP THROUGH THE HILLS.

AFTER SPREADING OUT, LOOK BEHIND EVERY BUSH! EVERY ENGLANDER MUST BE CAUGHT! HEIL HITLER!



THE IMMINENT THREAT OF DISCOVERY WAS THE LAST STRAW FOR CAPTAIN HANKEY.

WHAT THE DEVIL'S THE CAPTAIN UP TO NOW?

THE SWINE'S GOING TO GIVE US AWAY!

CURSE YOU, HANKEY, WE'RE NOT GIVING UP!



MALES' ANGRY SHOUT SPELLED DANGER FOR HANKEY FOR THE GERMAN OFFICER WAS TAKING NO CHANCES OF A TRICK.

COME ON, LADS! CRASH RIGHT THROUGH THEM AND UP THE OTHER SIDE!

THEY'VE KILLED, HANKEY!



THE ENRAGED FUSILIERS CHARGED HEADLONG DOWN THE SLOPE AND THROUGH THE ASTONISHED GERMANS.



ONCE OVER THE ROAD, THE NEW ZEALANDERS WITH THEIR LOOTED SCHMEISSER, SERGEANT SMITH WITH HIS BREN GUN AND MALES HIMSELF TURNED TO HOLD OFF THE GERMANS . . .



TWICE, THE GERMANS TRIED TO STORM THAT TINY BUT FORMIDABLE REARGUARD - TRIED AND FAILED.



SO, THE GERMANS SPLIT UP THEIR FORCES - AND THE HUNTED MEN MANAGED TO SLIP AWAY. DEEP IN THE HILLS AT LAST, MALES GAVE WAY TO SOMETHING LIKE DESPAIR FOR THE FIRST TIME.



HELP WAS INDEED AT HAND.

DO NOT BE ALARMED, ENGLISHMEN! I GIORGIOS! I AND MY FRIENDS FIGHT GERMAN SWINE ALSO! WE HELP YOU - WE HIDE YOU!



LED BY THE CRETANS TO A SOLITARY BUILDING HIGH UP IN THE MOUNTAINS, THEY AT LAST FOUND TIME TO REST. THERE THEY STAYED UNDISTURBED FOR THREE WEEKS.



SUCH DOUBTS ABOUT THE FUTURE WERE ANSWERED ~ SOMEWHAT SURPRISINGLY ~ THE NEXT DAY.



MALES JUMPED TO HIS FEET TO GREET THE NEWCOMER DELIGHTEDLY.

YOU CAN
WAVE YOUR MAGIC
WAND AND GET
US BACK TO
BLIGHTY!

I CAN'T QUITE DO THAT,
MY DEAR FELLOW! BUT I CAN
WHISTLE UP A SUBMARINE FOR
YOU! SAY A FORTNIGHT
TODAY?

COR!
JUST THE
JOB!

THIS
IS GREAT
NEWS, SIR.
IS THERE
ANYTHING
WE CAN
DO BEFORE
WE
LEAVE?

WELL, YOU CAN FIND OUT ALL YOU
CAN AND TAKE THE INFORMATION
BACK TO CAIRO! IT'S DIFFICULT
USING THE WIRELESS FOR LONG
MESSAGES - ESPECIALLY WITH
JERRY LISTENING OUT
FOR US!

SO WHAT WAS LEFT OF THE 50TH FUSILIERS BEGAN TO DO RECONNAISSANCE PATROLS AGAIN, SEEKING THE ENEMY'S FORTIFICATIONS.

LUMME, SIR!
LOOK AT THOSE
GUNS! THEY'VE
BEEN QUICK,
SETTING UP
THOSE!

VERY
INTERESTING!

AND SUPPLY
DUMPS.

LOOK AT THAT NASTY
LITTLE LOT! THIS MUST BE FOR
THE GUNS YOUR SKIPPER
TOLD US ABOUT
YESTERDAY!

THEY
MUST THINK
THEY'RE SAFE!
LOOK AT THAT -
ONLY TWO GUARDS,
AND NO
FENCE WORTH
MENTIONING!

WHEN SERGEANT SMITH REPORTED BACK TO JOHNNY MALES, HE FIRED AN AGGRESSIVE SPARK IN THE YOUNG OFFICER.

I HATE TO LEAVE THIS PLACE WITHOUT GIVING JERRY A BACK-HANDER, GIR!

ME, TOO! I WONDER IF WE MIGHT ARRANGE A LITTLE ACCIDENT TO THAT AMMO DUMP? GIORGIOS HAS SOME EXPLOSIVES!



THEIR SABOTAGE PLAN WENT INTO ACTION A FEW HOURS BEFORE THEIR RENDEZVOUS WITH THE SUBMARINE.

ACHTUNG! ENGLANDERS!

OKAY! WITHDRAW - FAST! SHE'LL BLOW IN TWO MINUTES!



THE WORK OF THE AMATEUR SABOTEURS WAS HIGHLY EFFECTIVE AND THE AMMUNITION DUMP WAS DESTROYED IN A SERIES OF TREMENDOUS EXPLOSIONS.



THE JUBILANT SOLDIERS WASTED NO TIME COVERING THE FIVE OR SIX MILES TO THEIR MIDNIGHT RENDEZVOUS WITH THE SUBMARINE.



HALF-WAY THROUGH THE FERRYING OPERATION TO THE SUBMARINE, THE GERMANS ARRIVED ON THE SCENE.

THE ENGLANDERS ARE ESCAPING BY U-BOAT! GET DOWN TO THE BEACH!



THE OVERLADEN RUBBER DINGHY TURNED AWAY FROM THE SANDY BEACH - LEAVING JOHNNY MALES TO HURL DEFIANCE AT THE ENEMY.



MOVE!
MOVE! KEEP THAT DINGHY GOING! I'LL HOLD 'EM OFF AS LONG AS I CAN!

THERE'S ONLY THE SKIPPER LEFT NOW! HE'LL NEVER HOLD THEM ANY LONGER.

STAND TO, GUN CREW - THREE ROUNDS RAPID AT THOSE JERRIES. GET DOWN THE HATCH, YOU SOLDIERS!



THOSE SHOTS GAVE JOHNNY MALES THE RESPITE HE NEEDED.



WITH SMOOTH, POWERFUL STROKES, HE SLID THROUGH THE WATER AND HAULED HIMSELF ON TO THE SUBMARINE'S STEEL HULL.



Chapter 3. The Watchtower

AFTER A SPELL OF LEAVE BACK IN EGYPT, MALES SOON BECAME BORED AND RESTLESS WITH THE MEMORIES OF THE EXCITEMENT AND ACTION IN CRETE.



THIS IS LIEUTENANT MALES, SIR! HE WANTS TO GO BACK TO CRETE! HE DID A VERY GOOD JOB THERE, YOU MAY REMEMBER!

M'M! WE COULD DO WITH A BIT MORE ACTION THERE! SOME TIMELY SABOTAGE ON THE AIRFIELDS MIGHT HELP OUR CONVOYS!

MALES WAS GIVEN PERMISSION TO GET VOLUNTEERS FOR HIS PARTY. HE WENT FIRST TO KASR-EL-NIL BARRACKS WHERE THE REMNANTS OF THE 50TH WERE GETTING INTO THE SORT OF TROUBLE WHICH IDLENESS BREEDS.

WELL, THAT'S THE SET UP! WHO'LL COME? WHAT ABOUT SERGEANT SMITH AND DUSTY MILLER?



SMUDGE SMITH GOT STRIPPED! HIM AND DUSTY'RE IN CLINK FOR SLUGGING A REDCAP! BUT THEY'LL COME FOR SURE - AND YOU CAN COUNT ME IN, SIR!

IF DUSTY GOES, I'LL GO!

ME, TOO!

HE SOUGHT OUT SMITH AND MILLER - TWO TRIED AND TRUE MEN.



AND SO, A FEW WEEKS LATER, THE SAME SUBMARINE. APPROACHED THE HOSTILE COAST OF CRETE.



FAMILIAR FACES GREETED THE RETURNING GROUP OF SOLDIERS AT THE RENDEZVOUS.



'ERE,
STEADY ON,
GIORGIOS,
MATE!

HELLO, MALES! SOME
PEOPLE JUST CAN'T KEEP
OUT OF TROUBLE! FOUND A
SMASHING PLACE FOR YOU!
GIORGIOS WILL GUIDE YOU!
BUT GET SOME REST - IT'S
TWO NIGHTS' HARD
MARCH.

THE GOING WAS HARD, FOR
GIORGIOS AND HIS FRIENDS
KEPT UP A CRACKING PACE.



THAT VILLAGE IS
ACCURSED - GERMANS ARE
THERE! WE GO ROUND! BUT,
ENGLISHMEN, WE MUST
HURRY, WE MUST REACH
THE FAR MOUNTAIN
BEFORE DAYLIGHT
TOMORROW!

AT DAWN THE FOLLOWING DAY, THEY REACHED THE END OF THEIR JOURNEY. . .



THE STURDY WATCHTOWER, STANDING IN A POSITION THAT OVERLOOKED ALL WAYS OF APPROACH TO THAT ISOLATED SPOT, WOULD MAKE AN IDEAL H.Q.

WE SHAN'T NEED THE GELI YET! BETTER BURY IT! DON'T WANT ANYONE KICKING THE BOX! PILE THE OTHER STUFF AGAINST THE WALL!

COR! CAN YOU IMAGINE OLD HANKEY IN THIS SET UP? HE'D HAVE A FIT!

DON'T SPEAK ILL OF THE DEAD, YOU HEATHEN!



BUT CAPTAIN HANKEY WAS FAR FROM BEING DEAD.

I HOPE THE HERR
HAUPTMANN IS NOW
FEELING BETTER
FROM HIS
WOUND?

WHY
HAVE YOU
KEPT ME APART
FROM THE OTHER
BRITISH
PRISONERS ALL
THESE
WEEKS?

SO
SORRY, HERR
HAUPTMANN! YOU
HAVE HAD THE
BEST OF
TREATMENT
BECAUSE WE
HAVE A USE
FOR YOU.

NO-ONE KNOWS YOU
ARE HERE! YOUR
COMRADES OF THE 50
GALLANT FIFTIETH
FUSILIERS MUST
BELIEVE YOU ARE
DEAD!

WHY
PICK ON
ME?

LET US SAY
YOU ARE SUITABLE
MATERIAL, MEIN HERR!
AGREE TO WHAT WE
WANT OR YOU WILL
END LIKE THIS POOR
UNFORTUNATE
FELLOW IN HERE!

THE S.S. MEN HAD PICKED THEIR
MAN UNERRINGLY. HANKEY WAS
TOO TERRIFIED TO REFUSE. . .

THERE ARE STILL
ENGLANDERS HIDING IN
THE HILLS! WE WANT THEM!
YOU WILL BRING THEM
TO US!

I WILL
DO IT IF YOU
PROMISE THEY
WILL NOT BE
HARMED!

WHAT IS
HARM, MY DEAR
SENSIBLE HERR
HAUPTMANN?

SO HANKEY WAS FREED AND WENT INTO THE HILLS, PRETENDING TO BE AN ESCAPED PRISONER.



A MEETING WAS ARRANGED ~ HANKEY HAD MADE HIS FIRST CONTACT.



HANKEY WENT BACK LIKE A DOG TO ITS TRAINER.

WELL DONE, HERR HANKEY! YOU WILL
LEAD THE MEN DOWN THIS WAY! AT THE END
OF THIS GULLY IS A BIG WHITE ROCK! HERE
YOU WILL TELL THE OTHER
ENGLANDERS TO STOP, WHILE YOU GO
AHEAD AND RECONNOITRE...

THEN
WE WILL MAKE
SUITABLE
ARRANGEMENTS!

THE UNSUSPECTING ALLIED SOLDIERS
FOLLOWED THE TREACHEROUS OFFICER.

HALT
HERE! KEEP
CLOSED UP!
I'LL SLIP ON
AND TAKE A
LOOK-SEE!



THEN DEATH BROKE LOOSE - TO CLAW DOWN THE HELPLESS SURVIVORS OF THE BATTLE OF CRETE WHERE THEY STOOD.



STRICKEN WITH HORROR, HANKEY RUSHED TO PROTEST TO THE GARDONIC S.S. OFFICER.



YOU PROMISED
YOU WOULD NOT
HARM THEM! WHY
DON'T YOU KILL
ME, TOO!

YOU WILL BE
MUCH TOO USEFUL
TO US, HERR HANKEY!
I COMPLIMENT YOU ON
A MOST EXPERT
PIECE OF WORK!
NOT ONE OF
THE DOGS
ESCAPED!



UNAWARE OF THE TRAGEDY ENACTED ONLY A FEW MILES AWAY, JOHNNY MALES' GROUP WERE PLANNING THEIR OWN WORK OF DESTRUCTION.

THIS IS A SNIP!
THEY THINK THEY'RE SO
SAFE THEY'VE ONLY GOT
TWO PROWLERS! AND
ONE MACHINE-GUN POST
AT THIS END OF THE
RUNWAY!

REGULAR
AS BLOOMIN'
CLOCKWORK! THEY
FINISH WORK BY
HALF-PAST ONE AND
CHANGE
THE GUARD AT
HOURLY
INTERVALS!



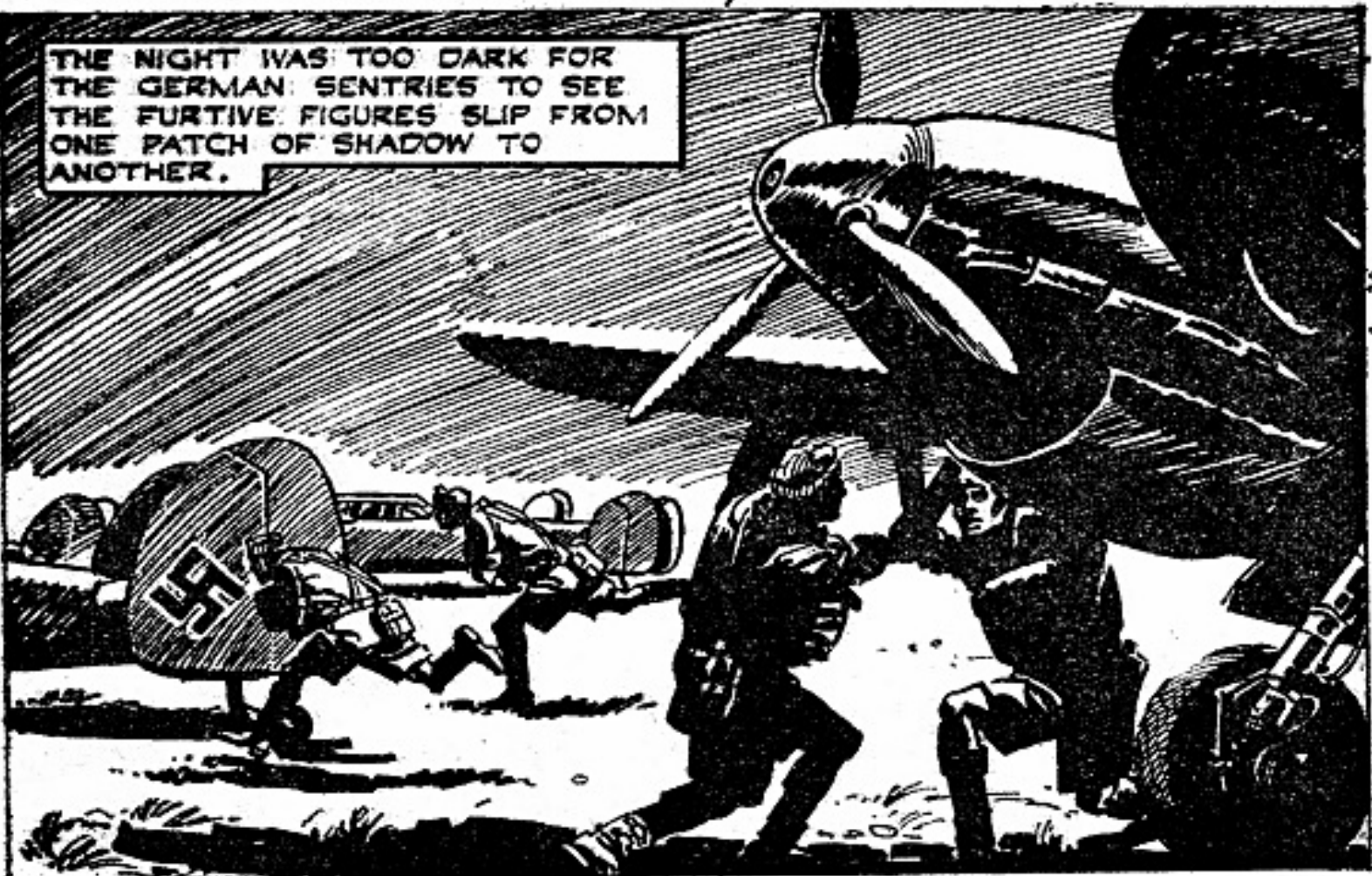
THEY WENT TO WORK ON THE NEXT MOONLESS NIGHT. . .

THE SENTRIES
ARE CHATTING WITH THE
MACHINE-GUNNERS...AND
THEY'VE JUST
COME ON
DUTY!

RIGHT! START FROM THE
FAR END! SLAP THE STICKIES
UNDER THE WING ROOTS!
HALF A MINUTE FOR EACH
ONE! SARN'T SMITH-YOU
AND THE OTHER SIX GIVE
US COVER IF WE
NEED IT!



THE NIGHT WAS TOO DARK FOR THE GERMAN SENTRIES TO SEE THE FURTIVE FIGURES SLIP FROM ONE PATCH OF SHADOW TO ANOTHER.



GET A SHAKE ON, DUSTY! WE'RE LATE!

TAKE IT EASY, SON! UNCLE DUSTY'S SLOW, BUT SURE!



THE FIRST EXPLOSION SHOCKED THE GERMANS - THE SECOND PANICKED THEM INTO ACTION.

SABOTAGE! - CALL OUT THE GUARD!



DUSTY MILLER WAS SURE ENOUGH - BUT
A FRACTION OF A SECOND TOO SLOW.

SIXTEEN,
SEVENTEEN,
EIGHTEEN...

BLAZES!
YOU
ALL RIGHT,
DUSTY!

ONLY
NICKED ME,
SIR! I'LL BE
OKAY!

THERE WAS NO TIME FOR FURTHER QUESTIONS. THEY SEPARATED TO
MAKE THEIR OWN WAY BACK TO THEIR BASE.

THAT WAS
A SMASHING STONK!
I COUNTED UP TO
TWENTY-TWO!

WHERE'S
DUSTY? ANYONE
SEEN HIM?

DON'T
WORRY, SIR! OLD
DUSTY'S
INDESTRUCTIBLE -
HE'LL BE BACK!

BUT DUSTY MILLER NEVER CAME BACK.

HERR GENERAL! THIS IS NO ESCAPED PRISONER OR ONE OF THOSE LEFT BEHIND! HIS UNIFORM IS NEW! HE HAS 'COMMANDO' ON HIS SHOULDER!

SO! THE DOGS HAVE LANDED SABOTEURS! AND WE CAN'T SEARCH FOR THEM WITH BURNT-OUT PLANES!

INSTEAD OF RECONNAISSANCE PLANES, THE GERMANS DECIDED TO USE A WEAPON THAT MIGHT PROVE FAR MORE EFFECTIVE.

HOW DO I KNOW YOU WILL KEEP YOUR WORD?

HERR HAUPTMANN HANKEY! I WILL KILL THE SABOTEURS, THAT IS MY DUTY! BUT I PROMISE ON MY HONOUR TO SEND YOU TO A PRISON CAMP IF YOU DO WHAT I ASK. NO-ONE WILL KNOW OF YOUR SHAME! BUT OTHERWISE, IT WILL BE BROADCAST FAR AND WIDE, THAT I PROMISE YOU!

HANKEY WAS COMPLETELY TRAPPED. NOW SCARED BEYOND ANYTHING HE HAD EVER KNOWN, HE COULD ONLY TURN MORE DEEPLY INTO HIS TREACHERY!

CHAR'S NEARLY BREWED, SARN'T!

GIORGIO SAYS THERE'S AN ESCAPED ENGLISH OFFICER SWANNING ABOUT DOWN THE VILLAGE, SIR!

BETTER TAKE A LOOK AT HIM, SMUDGER! HAVE HIM BROUGHT HERE!

SO IT WAS THAT JOSIAH HANKEY REJOINED THE MEN OF THE FIFTIETH FUSILIERS. JOHNNY MALES GREETED HIM WARMLY. . .

LOOK WHAT THE TIDE'S WASHED UP!

JOSH HANKEY! BY JUPITER! I'M PLEASED TO SEE YOU! WE ALL THOUGHT YOU'D COPPED IT!

I WAS BADLY HIT! BUT AS SOON AS MY WOUND HEALED I MADE A BREAK FOR IT! A CRETAN IN MALEME VILLAGE HOLED ME UP AND GAVE ME THESE CLOTHES.

HANKEY BEGAN TO FEEL HIS WAY. IT WAS EASIER THAN HE EXPECTED.

WE'VE BEEN DOING A SPOT OF DIRTY WORK ON OUR OWN! CARE TO JOIN US?

I KNOW ~ I HEARD THE BANGS! IT'S NOT QUITE MY CUP OF TEA, BUT I'LL DO WHAT I CAN. RECCE FOR YOU, PERHAPS? I KNOW THE AREA WELL ENOUGH BY NOW!



THE OPPORTUNITY FOR ANOTHER RAID WAS NOT LONG IN PRESENTING ITSELF.

MESSAGE FROM MISTER CAMERON-LOCKHART, SIR! HE SAYS THEY'VE CLEARED THE FIELD, AND A SQUADRON OF JU. EIGHTY-EIGHTS HAS FLOWN IN!



THAT'S FINE! WE'LL GO IN AGAIN ~ A DIFFERENT WAY! THROUGH THE JUNK YARD AND OUT THE OTHER SIDE!

THE FOLLOWING NIGHT, THE GROUP SET OFF AGAIN. HANKEY HAD GONE ON AHEAD ~ TO "RECONNOITRE".

HURRY, YOU ONLY HAVE AN HOUR! I WILL SHOW YOU WHERE THEY WILL BUNCH TOGETHER!

DO NOT WORRY, HERR HAUPTMANN! THE TRAP WILL NOT TAKE LONG TO SPRING!



ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE AIRFIELD, THE GERMANS HAD MADE A HUGE GRAVEYARD OF THE PLANES DESTROYED AND MALES USED THIS FOR HIS APPROACH.

THERE MUST
HAVE BEEN A REAL
OLD DUFFY HERE! JUST
LOOK AT ALL
THEM BROKEN-UP
KITES!

EVERYTHING'S
QUIET, SIR!
NOBODY
WORKING!

THEY HALTED AMIDST
THE MACABRE
COVER OF THE
WRECKED AIRCRAFT.

THERE'S THE
PROWLER GUARDS
BY THE HANGAR!
WHERE'S CAPTAIN
HANKEY? RUN
OUT ON US
AGAIN!

CAN'T WORRY
ABOUT HIM NOW! I DON'T
LIKE THE SMELL OF
THIS - IT'S TOO QUIET!
BRING UP THE
OTHERS WHILE
I HAVE A LOOK
AROUND!

SMITH CLOSED THE GROUP UP - AND AS THEY BUNCHED TOGETHER, THE HIDDEN MACHINE-GUNS OPENED UP. ONLY JOHNNY MALES WAS OUT OF THE LINE OF FIRE.

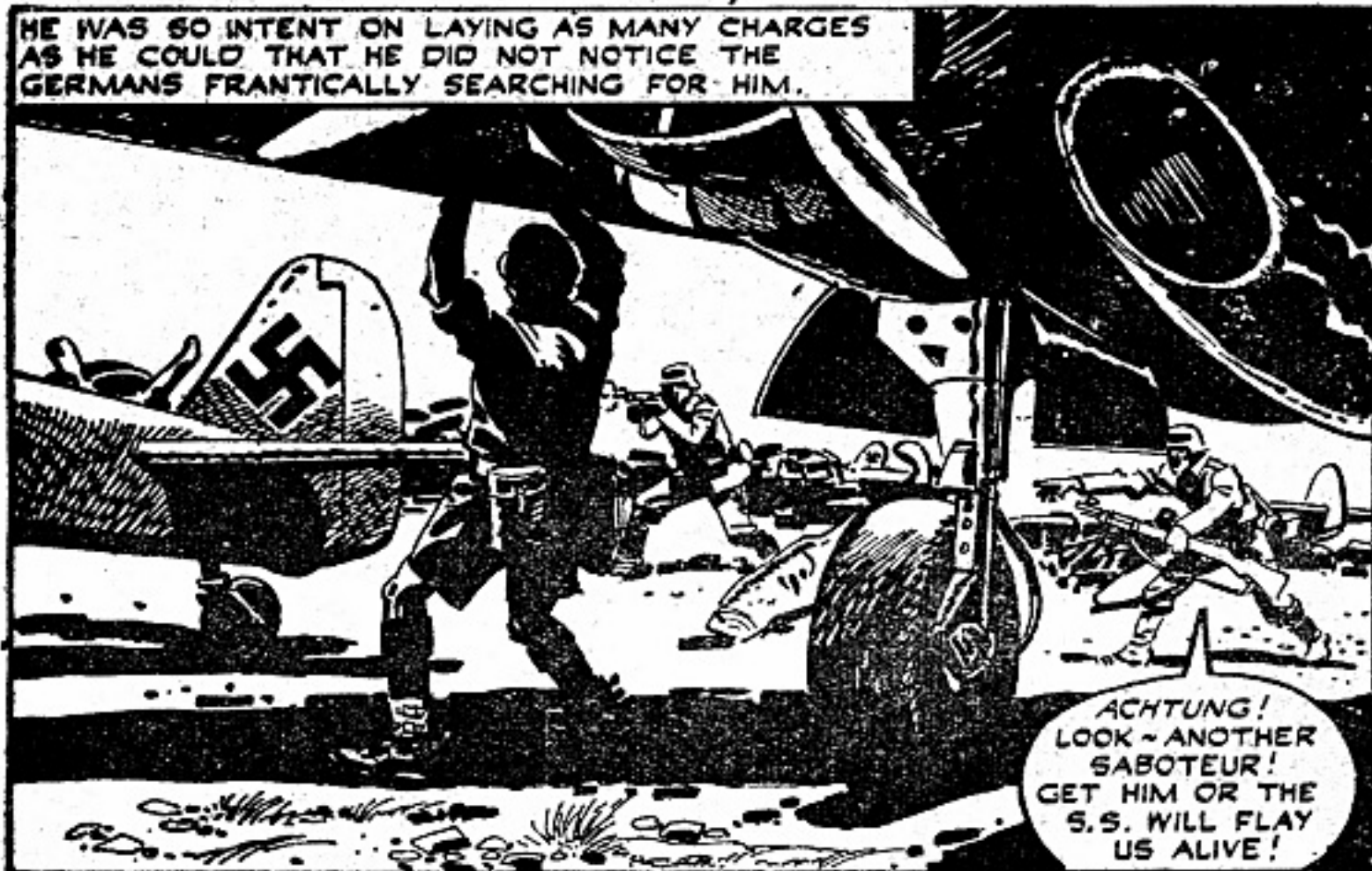


MALES WAS HELPLESS TO SAVE HIS MEN - AND HIS ONE THOUGHT NOW WAS OF BLIND REVENGE.

BY HEAVENS! NO-ONE COULD HAVE GOT OUT OF THAT ALIVE! I'LL GET SOME OF MY OWN BACK! THAT'S SEVEN PLANES FIXED! THREE CHARGES LEFT!



HE WAS SO INTENT ON LAYING AS MANY CHARGES AS HE COULD THAT HE DID NOT NOTICE THE GERMANS FRANTICALLY SEARCHING FOR HIM.



ACHTUNG!
LOOK - ANOTHER
SABOTEUR!
GET HIM OR THE
S.S. WILL FLAY
US ALIVE!

HIT BY A GLANCING BULLET, MALES SHOULD HAVE BEEN EASY PREY. BUT, AT THAT CRUCIAL MOMENT, THE FIRST OF HIS CHARGES EXPLODED...



I MUST
GET OUT
OF THIS!
I CAN DO
NO MORE
NOW!

AS THE OTHER CHARGES EXPLODED, CONFUSION GRIPPED THE GERMANS...



DONNERWETTER!
ANOTHER ONE
DESTROYED!

SCHNELL!
WE MUST
HELP PUT
OUT THE
FLAMES!

IN THE BRUTAL LIGHT OF DAY, HANKEY WAS FORCED TO IDENTIFY THE PITIFUL GROUP OF SLAUGHTERED COMMANDOS - AND SUDDENLY WAS SEIZED WITH A SPASM OF TERROR. . .



THERE WAS NO RELUCTANCE NOW IN HANKEY'S COLLABORATION - MALES WAS THE ONLY ENGLISHMAN ALIVE WHO KNEW OF HIS TREACHERY. HE MUST NOT LIVE TO TELL OF IT. . .



NO DOUBT EXISTED IN HANKEY'S TWISTED MIND THAT MALES WOULD HAVE COME BACK TO THE WATCHTOWER HIDEOUT, WHERE ELSE COULD HE GO?

HE
WILL BE
THERE!

SPREAD OUT! THERE
IS ONLY ONE! SEE THAT
HE DOES NOT
ESCAPE!

DON'T
FORGET!
I WANT HIM
ALIVE!

MALES HEARD THE
GUTTURAL SHOUTS AND
ROUSED HIMSELF
FROM THE PAIN-
RACKED STUPOR INTO
WHICH HE HAD SUNK,

HOW
THE DEVIL
DID THEY KNOW
I WAS HERE - OR
HOW TO GET HERE?
WAS IT THAT RAT,
HANKEY? YOU
DEVILS, I'M NOT TO BE
TAKEN
AS EASY AS
THAT!

EXPLOSIVES

TWO SHORT, ACCURATE BURSTS FROM THE BREN GUN SPLIT UP THE MENACING TIDE OF GERMANS.



EVERY EFFORT TO GET CLOSER TO THE WATCHTOWER WAS FOILED BY JOHNNY MALES' SHOOTING... AND THE ENEMY OFFICER DECIDED TO TRY A DIFFERENT APPROACH.



HIS TREMBLING LEGS SCARCELY ABLE TO SUPPORT HIM, HANKEY TOTTERED OUT INTO THE OPEN.

MALES! DON'T BE A FOOL! GIVE UP! YOU CAN'T GET AWAY!

SO IT WAS HANKEY! HOW MANY GOOD MEN HAS HE BETRAYED? BUT HE'LL BETRAY NO MORE...

HIS BODY ACHING UNBEARABLY FROM HIS WOUND, JOHNNY TRIED TO STEADY THE SIGHTS OF THE RIFLE ON THE RENEGADE ENGLISHMAN...

IF EVER A MAN DESERVED TO DIE... DON'T LET ME MISS...

THE RIFLE CRACKED - AND HANKEY SLUMPED TO THE GROUND WITHOUT A SOUND. INSTANTLY, A SPANDAU CLATTERED VICIOUSLY...

SCHNELL - FIRE AT THE TOWER! CORRECT YOUR AIM, YOU FOOL!

THE SIEGE WAS ON AGAIN.
THE GERMANS MOVED
FORWARD, BUT WITH
GREATER CAUTION.




BUT JOHNNY MALES KNEW HE
COULD NOT LAST MUCH
LONGER. HIS WOUND WAS
WEAKENING HIM - AND ONE
CONCERTED RUSH BY THE
ENEMY WOULD END THE
BATTLE.

THEY'LL
NEVER GET
ME! I'LL
BLOW THE
LOT!



THE SILENCE FROM THE WATCHTOWER
LULLED THE GERMANS INTO A
FALSE SENSE OF SECURITY. . .



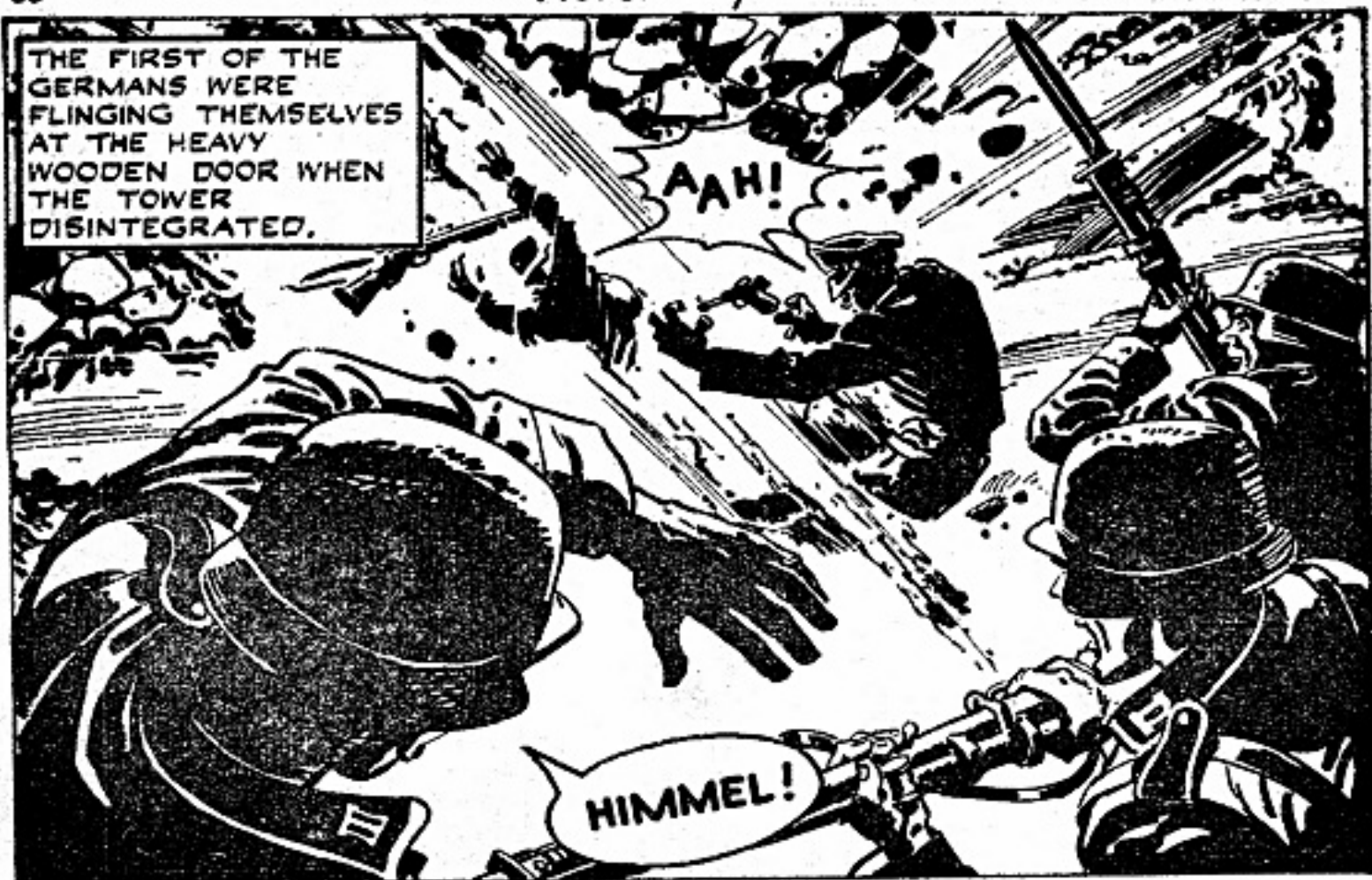
HE
IS HIT!
RUSH HIM!

JOHNNY HEARD THEIR FEET SLIPPING AND CLATTERING ON THE ROCKY
GROUND OUTSIDE AND KNEW THE END WAS NEAR. . .



HERE
THEY COME!
SEVEN
SECONDS
AND...

THE FIRST OF THE GERMANS WERE FLINGING THEMSELVES AT THE HEAVY WOODEN DOOR WHEN THE TOWER DISINTEGRATED.



THOSE OF THE GERMANS THAT SURVIVED WENT BACK TO THEIR BASE FOR HELP - GIVING GIORGIOS AND HIS MEN THE CHANCE TO DRAG JOHNNY MALES OUT OF THE RUINS. HE WAS NEARER DEAD THAN ALIVE. . .



THEY HID HIM AND CARED FOR HIM, FOR IT WAS MONTHS BEFORE HE COULD EVEN WALK AGAIN. SO IT WAS THAT CRETE BECAME HIS HOME.

Chapter 4. *End of Treachery*

MALES FINISHED HIS STORY.

WHAT ABOUT HANKEY?

I WAS TOLD BY THE VILLAGERS THAT THE GERMANS HAD CARRIED THE ENGLISH OFFICER AWAY! THEY PRESUMED HE WAS DEAD - HE WAS CERTAINLY NOT SEEN HERE AGAIN! I SUPPOSE MY SHOT MUST HAVE ONLY CREASED HIM, AFTER ALL.

PERHAPS IT WAS THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE PLACE, PERHAPS THE SIXTH SENSE WHICH MOST OLD SOLDIERS RETAIN, BUT SOMETHING MADE ME UNEASY.

JOHN, I'VE A QUEER FEELING WE'RE BEING WATCHED!

RUBBISH! JUST THE OLD TOWER LOOKING A BIT SINISTER! BUT IT'S ALL RIGHT! NO GHOSTS - QUITE EMPTY, NO-ONE EVER GOES THERE NOW!

BUT JOHNNY MALES WAS WRONG . . .
THE TOWER WAS NOT EMPTY.



AND THERE WAS CERTAINLY A
GHOST . . . A VERY MUCH ALIVE
ONE.

TWO SHOTS -
AND MY SECRET
WILL BE
SAFE!



NOW, IT IS AN INTERESTING FACT ABOUT GELIGNITE - WHEN IT IS OLD, IT
IS LIABLE TO DETONATE AT A SUDDEN SOUND, A VIBRATION OR A BLOW.



THE GELIGNITE THAT HAD BEEN
BURIED IN THE WATCHTOWER
TWENTY YEARS BEFORE WAS
AS OLD AS HANKEY'S
TREACHERY AND JUST AS
DANGEROUS.

THE FLAT CRACK OF THE RIFLE WAS SWALLOWED UP IN A SUDDEN EXPLOSION AS, FOR THE SECOND TIME, THE TOWER CRACKED OPEN...



THE RUMBLE OF THE EXPLOSION WAS LOSING ITSELF IN THE LABYRINTH OF HILLS AS JOHNNY MALES AND I WENT FORWARD... CAUTIOUSLY...

THAT MUST HAVE BEEN HANKEY WHO TOOK A SHOT AT US - WHO ELSE COULD IT BE?





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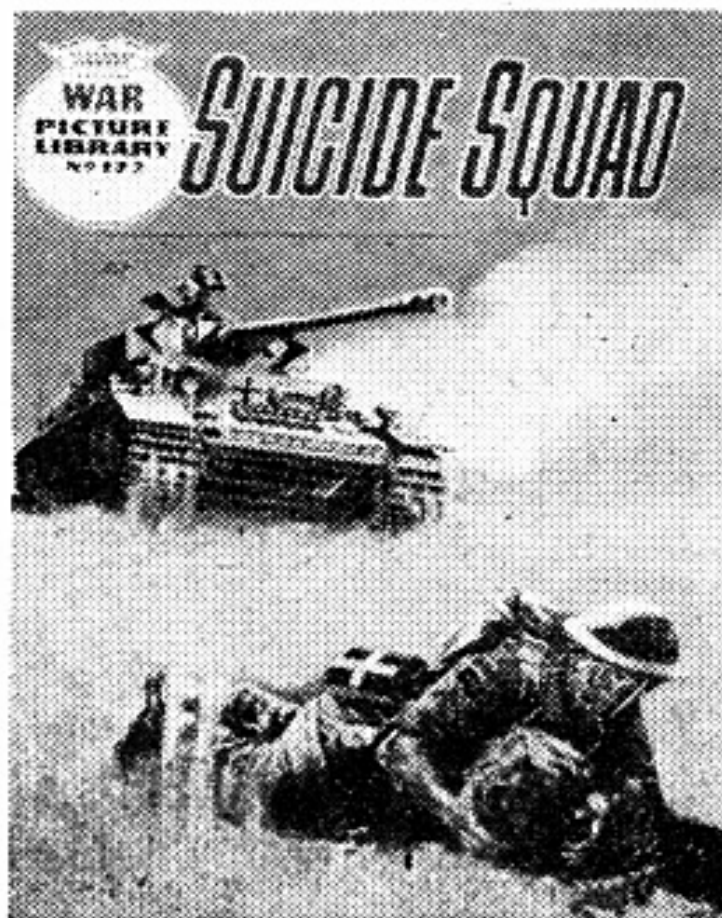
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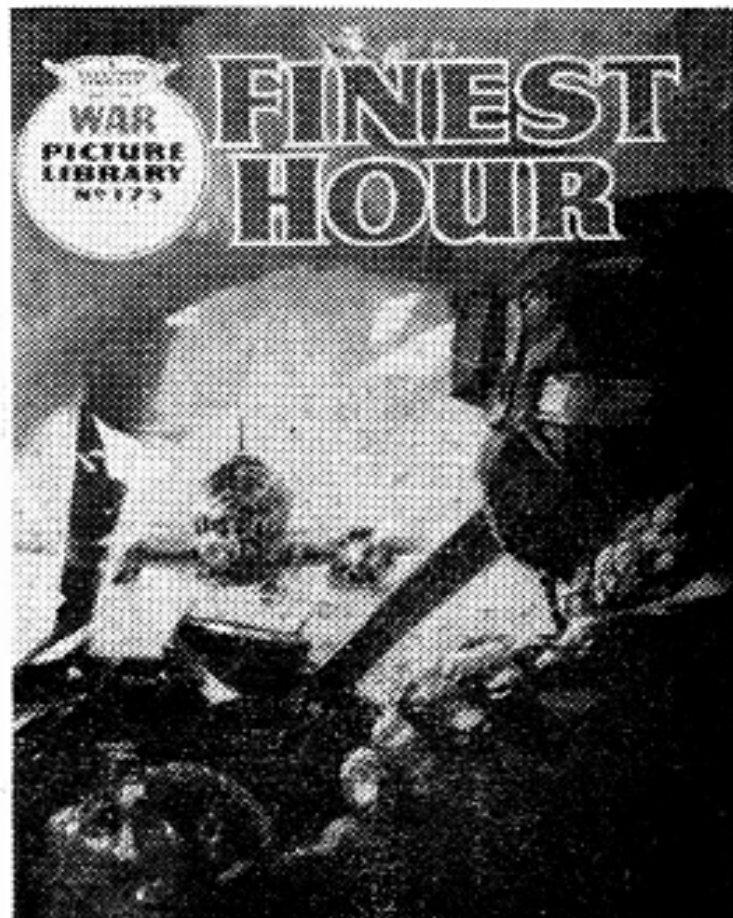
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